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State of Iowa
Enterprise IT Standards Program

Cross Calendaring Standard
Number: S-003-002

Comments Received during the Request for Comment Period
Conducted Oct. 23 – Nov. 6, 2003

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November 7, 2003
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Enclosed are the comments received during the enterprise-wide Request for Comment Period conducted from October 23 - November 6, 2003.

<u>Comments Received.</u>

<u>Comment #1.</u>
Submitted by: Department of Human Services.

The following response is on behalf of the DHS Executive Cabinet.

In the current fiscal state of government, any standards or requirements that will impose additional costs to the agencies should be considered carefully. DHS is not in a position to implement unfunded mandates without directly impacting service to our customers. To consider standards that merely provide administrative efficiency and at the expense of the citizens we serve is not supported by the agency.

Cross Calendaring.
DHS does not support cross calendaring as a standard or utility service. This capability should be provided as a market place service and purchased by the agencies that need the services for those employees they consider it applicable. Mandating this functionality across the entire agency is not cost effective or needed for the majority of staff in the agency.

<u>Comment #2.</u>
Submitted by: Iowa College Student Aid Commission.

What options will the agencies have to provide their data.   Will each agency need to provide an LDAP compatible service that will service requests made by a central directory program, or will sending a text file in a certain format be acceptable whenever changes are necessary?

Will ITE be aiding in the implementation of this for small agencies with
no expertise in this area?

Comment #3.
Submitted by: Dept. of Administrative Services – Information Technology Enterprise.

ITE recognizes the value of a common application that allows for cross-calendaring
between State employees. As written, this standard appears to simply acknowledge a
need for such an application. The standard does not appear to address the scope of
application so it is difficult to understand how broad of an application the standard is to
have. For example, will agencies have a choice to participate with this service offering,
or does this standard imply compliance by all agencies?

The requirement to support synchronization across disparate e-mail/calendaring systems
has been proven a difficult objective to achieve in testing conducted by the CIO
workgroup. With fifty-three separate email systems in use today, the concept of
synchronization proves to not be a practical solution. These findings were confirmed by
at least two independent vendors during the CIO presentations.

The two immediately feasible solutions appear to be: consolidation into an existing
messaging system or the acquisition of an independent calendaring application. In order
to achieve compliance with this standard, it is quite possible that decisions about scope of
the application and costs be identified prior to the adoption of the standard.

If the scope of cross calendaring is limited to select individuals within each agency, it is
likely that a separate calendaring application would be the most cost effective direction to
pursue. For a larger implementation of cross calendaring, the use of a common
messaging platform could be a less expensive option. With nearly 80% of the state
agencies already owning an Exchange license, there is a design that ITE has successfully
implemented with two engagements that is effective. Both ICN and Treasurer of State
have placed their Exchange infrastructure in the ITE Active Directory forest while
maintaining their own separate directory services. The Treasurer continues to use an NT
4.0 domain and the ICN continues to use their Active Directory (which is in a separate
forest). This model allows the agencies the ability to maintain separate directory
structures while also maintaining control of their Exchange resources. The Exchange
server is simply placed within the centralized Active Directory, but management of the
server can be left to the respective agency. This design leverages the existing
investments that agencies have made in the Exchange technology while also
accomplishing the cross-calendaring goal. Lastly, control of the Exchange components
can be delegated to the agency so the messaging technology can be managed locally.

Comment #4.
Submitted by: Iowa Workforce Development.

IWD supports the Cross Calendaring Service Standard as written.

Comment #5.
Submitted by: Iowa Utilities Board (Commerce/Utilities).

The IUB has few employees for whom cross calendaring would be an important
service. A DAS-ITE market place or utility service that would be available
for purchase by the agencies for only those employees that need it could
make sense if it can be done cost effectively.

Draft version of Cross Calendaring Standard.

The draft version of the Cross Calendaring standard that was distributed
to the enterprise for comment follows:

Standard:	S-003-002
Technology:	Electronic Directory Services
Category:	Cross Calendaring Service
Purpose:	To deploy a cross calendaring application to allow users to display free/busy time from disparate e-mail/calendaring across the state enterprise.

Effective Date: Upon completion of the IT Standards Adoption Process

Introduction: This standard was proposed by the state of Iowa CIO Council to
address cross calendaring capability across the state enterprise.

Standard: The cross calendaring application must be capable of providing
fully populated contact information that supports synchronization and links with disparate
e-mail/calendaring systems across the state enterprise.